312 hour for the impurities and the residue to settle to the bottom of
271 the vessel. Then the water is poured off into another container and is ready to be used for drinking or cooking.

[824] (b) It is also possible to use an additive known as missim (crushed tamarind leaves). The water becomes clear, but it is, of course, somewhat sour. Although it may be drunk, it is
[552] ideally suited to cooking since the Mossi add missim (from miki, "to make sour") even to the water of springs and wells before they use it to prepare their principal food, sagbo.

744 In the town of Ouagadougou frequent visits by the sanitary
312 officers remind the natives of the necessity of keeping fresh water in their containers. They are also encouraged to fill in during the winter the low places holding water where mosquitoes might breed.

515 Laundering. There is no doubt [231] that the Moaga is care-
296 less about the cleanliness of his clothing. There is no shortage of soap -- karite butter, of which it is made, is plentiful -- but he believes that frequent laundering will wear out his clothes too quickly. He also thinks -- which is childish -- that the dirtier a garment is, the cleaner it will wash. He thinks it completely ridiculous for clothes to be ironed. It must be admitted that among the Mossi only a married man can require his wives to wash his clothes. A mother also takes care of her children's clothes, but a bachelor is forced to wash his own things. This, we think, explains the extreme negligence shown by some of them
[461] who let their clothes get dirtier and dirtier. Indolence, alas, is one of the dominant defects of the native of Mossi country.

514 Toilet arrangements. In general the Mossi have no regular latrines. Men, women, in short, everyone, simply goes into the bush. The only exception is the very young children who take care of their needs on the threshold. At night, especially during the winter when the grain is fairly tall, grownups themselves go to the kamanga or karaga (millet or maize field near the living quarters).

364 When the town of Ouagadougou was made a mixed commune [Ed., smallest French territorial subdivision, with both French and native representation in the municipal council], it was possible to install, at municipal expense, a number of lavatories in certain

364 sections and especially around the market. Now formal regulations require the inhabitants [232] to dig latrine ditches in the compounds, but it will be a long time before the native loses the habit of relieving himself in the open air.

Chapter 15

Mossi Dances and their Significance (1)

1. An excerpt, revised and completed, from a lecture delivered by the author on December 24, 1926.

535 In this chapter, we shall describe the Mossi dances, explain their meaning, and tell of the old beliefs with which they are connected.

Indeed, these dances occupy a place apart in the general category of dances of indigenous peoples.

The latter, for the most part and notably among the Boussancé and the Gourma [Gurma], are only exuberant displays, sometimes exercises in suppleness, sometimes caricatures of the motions of love.

The Mossi dances, on the other hand, are actually performed in accordance with fixed rules. There are three types: 1) dances which we shall call sentimental, known as wennega; 2) dances that are part war dance and part religious, called waongo; and finally 3) funeral dances known as warba.

535 533 832 In order of precedence, let us begin with the love dance called wennega. This is executed at gatherings. The lover and his sweetheart -- the latter dressed in black, the ceremonial color -- are receiving their friends. Beer is flowing, and mouths are filled with kola nuts. Soon the musicians strike up [234] their [534] rustic guitars (kondé) which are accompanied by the beating of gourds. The women sing:

539 533 M' Ba sida talem néré
Talem kan-kaïn, talemti
Pagh ka zaïd koulogh wa mandé

●364 For the Mossi, as for all other men, life ends in death, with or without illness. The Blacks do not know how to prevent diseases, and they know very little about fighting them. Hygiene is almost unknown. The huts are poorly aired, the chickens and in general all the animals in the inner courtyard walk everywhere and foul everything. The courtyard is swept often, but the hut of the sheep and goats is located in the midst of the other dwellings; the horse is kept within the soukala [514] itself; and people relieve themselves anywhere, wherever they find a convenient spot. The manure is gathered in a heap, but it is kept next to the huts and gives off a nauseating smell and noxious miasmas, especially at the beginning of the rainy season.

515 The Mossi are not dirty, but they cannot be called clean. Those who dwell in villages abundantly supplied with water at all times are the cleanest. The women, who fetch water every day and thus have an opportunity to wash, are usually cleaner than the men. A Mossi never passes a pond without drinking copiously and washing all over, and this would seem to prove that those who go dirty do so unwillingly; they have no water nearby, and it would be too much trouble to go to the river to bathe. Clothing, especially breechcloths, is often repulsively dirty. This is because washing wears out clothes, and who knows when new ones will be available? No wonder disease has such a hold on this people.

855 Child care is quite rudimentary: a few baths; enemas two or three
165 times a day, without which it is said their bowels would not move; and that is all. At the slightest indisposition the sorcerer is consulted, or else the child is left to himself; he will get well or die, and nothing is done about it. As a consequence, child mortality is very high.

758 Those who fall prey to a contagious disease are not isolated. A healthy child lies on the same mat as one with smallpox, a leper drinks from the common gourd unless his lips are covered with sores. People do, however, hesitate to sit where a syphilitic person with sores previously sat. The education of the Mossi in matters of hygiene is wholly yet to be learned.

576 On meeting someone, Mossi politeness requires that an inquiry be made about his health and that of all his relatives. The response invariably is "So-and-So is well," and the other in turn responds, "May God permit his health to wax." It is only after a little conversation that a certain person is said to be ill or to be getting better.

195 It is not said that someone died, but that he ran short of strength, that he passed away, that he left us.